

Did you know?

- ♥ The American Public Welfare Association (APWA) estimates that there are currently 500,000 children in foster care or some sort of out-of-home care.
- ♥ Currently there are more than 42,000 CASA volunteers in 770 programs across the country.
- ♥ There are more than 200 CASA volunteers in Maricopa County.
- ♥ CASA volunteers act on behalf of the child during the life of the case, ensuring that the child remains safe, until there is a permanent resolution.
- ♥ A recent study of the CASA program indicates that CASAs are effective in reducing the length of time in out-of-home placement, and minimizing the number of placement changes of a child. Judges gave an overall favorable evaluation of CASA volunteers, and found their reports clear and concise.

**Speak
up
for a
Child.**



CASA PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

To administer a community-based volunteer program within the Superior Court system advocating for the best interest of abused, neglected, abandoned or delinquent children who are wards of the court.

For more information about the CASA program, please contact the CASA office:

CASA OFFICE:

Maricopa County Juvenile Court

CASA Program

3125 W. Durango St., Suite 243

Phoenix, AZ 85009

(602) 506-4083 • Fax (602) 506- 5512

TDD number (602) 542-9545



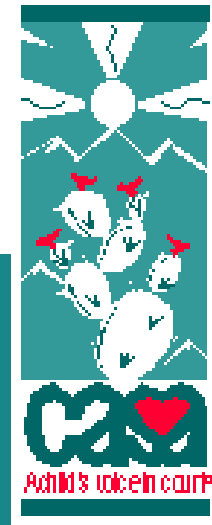
Court's Hotline:

1-800-732-8193

This publication can be provided in an alternative format upon request to assist persons with disabilities.

The Arizona CASA Program is supervised and operated locally by Arizona's Juvenile Courts and administered statewide by the Arizona Supreme Court.

Court Appointed Special Advocates



*Speaking up for Abused
and Neglected Children*

*This brochure is designed to familiarize those involved in the care of dependent children with the **CASA** volunteer.*

WHAT IS A CASA?

A Court Appointed Special Advocate is a specially screened and trained volunteer appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interests of an abused, neglected, or abandoned child.

WHAT DOES A CASA DO?

- ♥ The CASA talks with the child, family members, case managers, school officials, foster parents, treatment providers, and others who are knowledgeable about the child's history and the facts of the case.
- ♥ The CASA reports to the judge on the child's placement and progress by observing and assessing problems, identifying unmet service needs, and making recommendations regarding appropriate resources.
- ♥ The CASA develops and maintains a relationship with the child.
- ♥ The CASA attends staffings related to the child's progress as a member of the team, and participates in case and treatment planning.
- ♥ The CASA attends court hearings and Foster Care Review Board meetings.
- ♥ The CASA makes a recommendation to the judge about whether it is in the child's best interest to stay with his or her parents or guardians, be placed in foster care, or become available for permanent adoption.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A CASA:

- ♥ The CASA will ask a lot of questions.
- ♥ The CASA will have regular visits (weekly, or otherwise scheduled) with the child, and with permission, take the child places.
- ♥ The CASA will ask for, and may copy, confidential information as allowed by court order.
- ♥ The CASA will be persistent.
- ♥ The CASA will act in the best interest of the child.

A CASA SHOULD:

- ♥ Determine a primary point of contact with the placement i.e., staff member or foster parent.
- ♥ Maintain contact and obtain permission for visitation or outings from point of contact.
- ♥ Request governing rules and guidelines of placement, if applicable, and adhere to these rules.
- ♥ Be invited to and participate in staffings.
- ♥ Determine from CPS the licensing agency managing the placement.

QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS:

- ♥ If a CASA is assigned to a child in your care and you have questions about his/her performance, please review the court order of appointment and list of duties and responsibilities.
- ♥ Contact a coordinator at the CASA office for further clarification or problem-solving.

A CASA CAN:

With CPS/CASA Coordinator approval:

- ♥ Supervise or monitor visits with family members.
- ♥ Assist in arranging visits.
- ♥ Assist in applying for victim witness assistance.
- ♥ Assist in exploring alternative placements for the child.
- ♥ Assist in resource and service identification.

A CASA CANNOT:

- ♥ Have an overnight visit, unless permitted by court order.
- ♥ Perform home studies for an out-of-state or in-state agency.
- ♥ Make placement arrangements for the child.
- ♥ Give money or expensive gifts.

A CASA CAN HELP...

- ♥ To connect with a child in need, and offer them trust, stability, and advocacy during complex legal proceedings.
- ♥ To make something that has gone terribly wrong, a little bit better.
- ♥ To help provide consistency and continuity in a child's life during a time of turmoil.
- ♥ The judge decide what is in the best interest of the child by making recommendations to the court and participating in staffings.

